

Approved by EQAC, February 10, 2016

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
COUNTY OF FAIRFAX
SUMMARY OF THE ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

DATE: JANUARY 12, 2016

The public hearing commenced at 7:30 P.M. in conference rooms 2 and 3 of the Government Center.

The following EQAC members were present:

Stella Koch (Chairman, At-Large)	Ken Lanfear (Hunter Mill)
Larry Zaragoza (Vice Chairman, Mount Vernon)	Robert McLaren (At-Large)
Linda Burchfiel (At-Large)	Paul Pitera (Braddock)
Johna Gagnon (Lee)	Alex Robbins (Providence)
Richard Healy (Mason)	Rich Weisman (Sully)
George Lamb (At-Large)	Katrina White (Student Member)

The following members of county staff were present:

Kambiz Agazi	Noel Kaplan
--------------	-------------

Stella Koch welcomed all those in attendance, provided introductory remarks, and asked EQAC and staff members to introduce themselves.

Noel Kaplan reviewed logistical considerations and asked everyone present to sign in. He noted that there were two video presentations in addition to the oral testimony to be offered by speakers.

The video testimony was provided by the following:

- Friends of Accotink Creek
- Avi Dey

There were 12 speakers, 10 of whom provided copies of their presentations and/or notes at or subsequent to the hearing. The speakers were:

- Eric Goplerud—Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Jean Wright—Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Scott Cameron
- Mary Cortina, Fairfax County Park Authority Board
- Steve Larsen
- Kris Unger, Friends of Accotink Creek
- John Cartmill—Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
- Kay Fowler
- Robert Makheja—RJM Companies

- Nils Bjork
- Monica Billger—Audubon Naturalist Society
- Flint Webb—Air and Waste Management Association, Climate Change Division

In addition, the following did not testify at the public hearing but provided written testimony, either before or after the public hearing:

- Randy Atkins
- Avi Dey (Mr. Dey also provided a slide presentation)
- Audubon Society of Northern Virginia (Carl Kikuchi, President)
- Joyce Harris (two separate pieces of testimony, one with Henry Harris)
- Elizabeth Lonoff

Unless otherwise noted, participants presented testimony as individuals rather than on behalf of groups.

1. Eric Goplerud (Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions)

Dr. Goplerud's read from his prepared testimony, which is included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary. He circulated two handouts that were referenced in his testimony—one of the handouts (addressing EQAC's views on staff responses to its Annual Report Climate Change and Energy recommendations) has been incorporated within his written comments, while the other (providing one-paragraph excerpts addressing county facilities management from the last five Annual Reports on the Environment) is appended to his written statement within the written materials attachment.

Dr. Goplerud also provided a copy of the Climate Change and Energy chapter of EQAC's 2015 Annual Report on the Environment highlighting changes from the previous year's chapter. This handout is available upon request to EQAC (EQAC@fairfaxcounty.gov) or to the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning (703-324-1380).

Dr. Goplerud expressed frustration at what he views as the county's slow progress, if not inaction, on energy management and climate change efforts. He noted efforts being pursued by Arlington County and Washington D.C. and noted that a progress report prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments highlighted efforts of these two localities but not Fairfax County.

Dr. Goplerud noted only limited changes to the Climate Change and Energy chapter in EQAC's Annual Report on the Environment over the last five years and the lack of any changes to a paragraph addressing county facilities management. He noted only a limited, and negative, change to the text addressing vehicle services and a limited discussion of efforts by Fairfax County Public Schools, despite \$42 million spent by the school system on electricity and gas. In summarizing EQAC's "Scorecard"

summaries of staff responses to EQAC's Annual Report Climate Change and Energy recommendations, and in noting the similarity of recommendations from the 2014 and 2015 reports, he highlighted a lack of progress.

Citing supportive estimates from Fairfax County on a variety of public opinion poll questions relating to climate change and energy, Dr. Goplerud asked for urgent actions from the county and from Fairfax County Public Schools, including, by a specific date, the public display of energy use from all county and school buildings. He concluded by stressing the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to prepare the community to adapt to climate change.

Larry Zaragoza thanked Dr. Goplerud for his comments. He expressed his view that, while county efforts are still needed, there has been progress.

2. Jean Wright (Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions)

Rev. Dr. Wright read from her prepared testimony, which is included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary.

Rev. Dr. Wright's comments focused on her commitment to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, with the eventual ending of use of fossil fuels. She noted the recent related Encyclical from Pope Francis as well as the recent greenhouse gas emissions reduction agreement reached by 196 countries at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris.

Rev. Dr. Wright noted efforts by Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions to encourage people of faith and congregations to reduce their carbon emissions by 50% and achieve carbon neutrality by 2030, noting that her own congregation (Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax) is beginning this process. She applauded what has been done so far by Fairfax County but stressed that more is needed and that the pace needs to be accelerated. She identified two specific "asks"

- Publication of the county's energy dashboard on the county's website no later than May; and
- An EQAC recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for the establishment of a task force (similar to Chairman Bulova's Private Sector Energy Task Force) to develop a comprehensive Fairfax County energy strategy, with goals and dates for implementation and a special focus on energy efficiencies.

Stella Koch thanked Rev. Dr. Wright for her comments and for the clarity of her requests to EQAC. She noted that the Board of Supervisors would be reviewing its environmental vision and suggested that, through this review, there would be much discussion of environmental goals.

Larry Zaragoza expressed appreciation for Rev. Dr. Wright's comments. In response to a follow-up question from Rev. Dr. Wright, Ms. Koch and Dr. Zaragoza noted that EQAC issues recommendations to the Board of Supervisors that are separate from the Annual Report on the Environment.

3. Scott Cameron

Mr. Cameron identified himself as a Mount Vernon District resident and a newly-elected Director of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District Board, but he stressed that his comments were being presented as an individual. He read his prepared statement, which is included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary. His comments raised the following concerns:

- The need for the county to reliably regulate future development based on sound land use planning, with the proposed development on the Reston National Golf Course identified as an example that would set a negative precedent. He stressed support for the Rescue Reston effort.
- The need for stream rehabilitation efforts to commence on a wooded parcel (the Fairchild property in the Spring Bank community along Richmond Highway south of the Capital Beltway) that was given to, and accepted by, the county.
- The need to ensure that no one particular community would bear a disproportionate or indefinite burden in regard to environmental responsibilities. Toward this end, he recommended that the permit for the Lorton Landfill not be extended when it expires in 2018.
- The need for the county to do a better job in setting priorities for funding stormwater management projects and in making the process more transparent.
- The need for enhanced funding for, and attention to, invasive species management throughout the county.

Bob McLaren expressed support for Mr. Cameron's comment regarding invasive species management. He cited the county's Invasive Management Area program as the most cost-effective program in the county.

Stella Koch highlighted the difficulty and complexity of pursuing stream restoration projects, noting constraints relating to projects on private land as well as opportunities that the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services has identified (e.g., partnerships with Fairfax County Public Schools). She expressed her view that this was not a black and white issue, and she suggested that Craig Carinci (Director of the Stormwater Planning Division of DPWES) to brief EQAC on the decision-making process.

Ken Lanfear expressed support for Mr. Cameron's concern about the need for better coordination of projects; he cited differences between initial stream restoration efforts in Reston and more recent efforts requiring less tree clearing.

Larry Zaragoza expressed appreciation for Mr. Cameron's comments and suggested that he raise his concern about the Fairchild property to the Fairfax County Park Authority.

4. Mary Cortina (Fairfax County Park Authority Board)

Ms. Cortina identified herself as an At-Large member of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board. She read her prepared statement, which is included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary. Her comments included the following areas of emphasis:

- The results of the Park Authority's 2015 Needs Assessment, highlighting the public's support for the Park Authority's open space and environmental protection efforts and noting a positive trend over time in public views on open space acquisition and natural resource management.
- Appreciation of EQAC's support for the Park Authority's natural resource management efforts.
- The Park Authority's Natural Resource Management Plan and strategic efforts by the Park Authority to align natural resource staffing with the themes identified in the plan.
- Additional hiring by the Park Authority of ecologists (increasing the number from four to five merit ecologist positions).
- Support from seasonal ecologists
- Alternative funding strategies to support FCPA's natural capital efforts (e.g., revenue from telecommunications leases; Environmental Improvement Program funding).
- Success of the Park Authority's "Helping Our Land Heal/Forest Management" pilot project and its anticipated replication throughout the park system.

Ms. Cortina concluded her comments by again thanking EQAC for its support and encouragement of the Park Authority's environmental initiatives.

Stella Koch thanked Ms. Cortina for her comments and recommended that another joint EQAC/FCPA Board meeting be scheduled.

Ms. Koch asked Ms. Cortina what a robust natural resource staffing level in the Park Authority would be. Ms. Cortina referenced a survey of residents regarding what they would do for parks with \$100 and suggested that there was about a \$2 difference in the result from this survey and the current level of funding for natural resource efforts (including all of the different sites FCPA has and the staffs that work at these sites), equating to about \$600,000, which is what EQAC has been recommending for several years. She expressed her view that this level of increased funding was something that FCPA should be able to find a way to do, recognizing that it would be

an annual commitment. She also stressed the need for a more holistic management of natural resources, including streams and the natural areas these streams go through. She suggested that funding for stream restoration efforts ought to consider the lands these streams flow through.

Bob McLaren noted that the \$600,000 that has been recommended by EQAC for many years is only for the first phase of implementation of the Natural Resource Management Plan and that much more would be needed to support full implementation. He requested that, in the Park Authority's submission of information for next year's Annual Report, the full amount needed for implementation of the plan be identified.

Ms. Cortina stated that she has asked this question but that the first phase of the effort (inventory and planning) would need to be done before the full amount could be determined. She noted that this first phase was funded and under way. She expressed her view that it would not be unreasonable to look at the \$600,000 funding level for ecologists, recognizing that there are additional needs for things like removal of invasive plants.

Mr. McLaren expressed appreciation for what the Park Authority has done over the years to increase its attention and dedication to natural resource protection, noting earlier imbalances favoring active recreation. He noted a slow evolution (which he expressed as being too slow) in support of natural resource efforts and indicated that he was pleased to see this evolution.

Ms. Cortina acknowledged that efforts sometimes require long periods of time to come to fruition—she cited the Huntley Meadows Park wetlands restoration project as an example, noting that this project took 30 years to fund the work that needed to be done (\$3 million in bond funding).

Ms. Koch expressed her view that nobody wins if money is simply shifted from one pot to another—she stressed the need to get more funds, not to rearrange funds.

5. Steve Larsen

Mr. Larsen identified himself as a 25-year resident of the New Alexandria/Belle View community in the Mount Vernon District. He read from a prepared statement. Subsequent to the public hearing, he provided a copy of his written statement along with his summary of the related questions and answers. This document is included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary.

Mr. Larsen's comments addressed the impacts that sea level rise and an associated rapid increase in flood insurance costs are having on his community. He provided a brief history of his community, noting that the present-day homes there date to the early 1930s. He noted that there are nearly 250 single family homes in New

Alexandria and nearly 1,500 multifamily residential dwelling units (now condominiums) in the Belle View and River Tower developments. He also noted the shopping center that is located within the western portion of the community.

Mr. Larsen presented a map identifying most of his community as being located within the 100-year floodplain of the Potomac River, with ground elevations typically between 7 and 10 feet about sea level but as low as 4-5 feet. He noted that a levee, flood gate and pumping station project that was constructed in the 1980s and 1990s protects the lowest-lying homes in the community from floods of up to about 7.5 feet above sea level. He noted that the George Washington Memorial Parkway, with an elevation of 8 feet, also provides protection to the community.

Mr. Larsen noted the extensive damage to his community caused by Hurricane Isabel in 2003 and referenced efforts subsequent to that storm to identify measures that could be taken to better protect the community from similar storms in the future. He commended then-Supervisor Hyland for obtaining funding for a study of feasible protection options and noted the leadership of the county's Stormwater Management program in working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop preliminary designs for several options, each of which would include various combinations of levees, walls, gates and pumping stations. He stated that Supervisor Hyland had established a community task force to evaluate these proposals and to obtain additional feedback from residents.

Mr. Larsen indicated that each of the protection options has many positive and negative attributes but that he wouldn't be addressing those specifics in his comments. He instead stressed the need for quick action, highlighting the historical tracks of hurricanes in Virginia, the historic flood elevations of storms that have affected his community and the anticipated implications of sea level rise on the frequency and severity of hurricanes in the future, based on the historic record. He suggested that, by mid-century, with a two-foot rise in sea level, there could be an expectation that a flood would top the George Washington Memorial Parkway an average of once every 13 years (up from the historic average of once every 43 years) and that, with a four foot rise in sea level, there would be regular flooding with high tides.

Mr. Larsen noted that the increased risk to his community was evident from rapidly increasing flood insurance rates. He indicated that, under the National Flood Insurance Program, it costs between \$2,200 and \$3,500 to insure an older home in the community, which is double the rate prior to Hurricane Isabel. He added that, with the removal of federal subsidies, there could be another doubling of the rate over the next several years and that some insurance experts have projected five-figure rates for communities with similar flood ratings. He stressed the large negative impact that these rates would have on home values.

Mr. Larsen concluded his remarks by commending EQAC's recognition of the sea level rise issue in its Annual Report on the Environment, noting the county's efforts to protect the Huntington community, and noting federal funding allocated to the Dyke Marsh restoration project. He urged EQAC to continue to keep his community in the forefront of its discussions and reports to the Board of Supervisors.

Larry Zaragoza thanked Mr. Larsen for bring this issue to EQAC's attention.

George Lamb asked if walls and levees were the only practical solution to the problem. Mr. Larsen replied that this was the case. He noted options that had been considered during the Corps of Engineers' review and concluded that the only approach that would protect the community would be an elevated barrier along with flood gates/pumping stations along the tidal creeks to the south of the community. He noted the difficulty and expense associated with raising existing homes, indicating that the cost of this approach, if feasible at all, would typically far exceed the value of the structure.

Ken Lanfear noted that Mr. Larsen had indicated that the community provides a tax base of over \$500,000,000. He asked if that figure included the condominiums. Mr. Larsen confirmed that his estimate included the current selling prices of condominiums in the Belle View and River Towers areas.

6. Kris Unger (Friends of Accotink Creek)

Mr. Unger read from his prepared comments, which are included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary. His testimony expressed support for EQAC's priority recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, and particularly its recommendations for continuing and increasing funding for environmental programs and for developing policies to address climate change. He also expressed support for EQAC's emphasis on support for natural resource management efforts by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Mr. Unger highlighted the resiliency of freshwater mussels by highlighting his recent participation in a survey in Accotink Creek, which indicated that mussels appear to be thriving. He expressed his fascination with the lifecycles of freshwater mussels and cited this as one example of the wonders of nature in the county.

He concluded his comments by expressing gratitude to the many partners in the county who are working to protect the environment and by stressing the need to create a sustainable path forward by working with nature.

Stella Koch asked Mr. Unger if there were specific requests he wanted EQAC to consider. Mr. Unger replied that he didn't have any such requests aside from continuing to work together.

7. John Cartmill (Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions)

Mr. Cartmill's comments focused on carbon dioxide emissions and the need for Fairfax County to reduce its carbon footprint, particularly for county buildings. He noted the large amount of money that the county spends on energy for its buildings and stressed that every dollar wasted could have been spent on other important county efforts. He also noted that county buildings have long life-spans--energy efficiency decisions made today will have impacts far into the future. Finally, he expressed a need for the county to take a leadership role in energy efficiency. He recommended that, for new county projects, the county aim for the gold and platinum ratings under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) program rather than the current silver rating target. He also recommended that energy consumption in county buildings be made public in a timely manner. He cited transparency and energy awareness for county officials, employees and taxpayers as reasons for this recommendation. He again stressed the need for action on climate change and encouraged EQAC to support these recommendations.

8. Kay Fowler

Ms. Fowler expressed her appreciation for the yearly forum that EQAC provides through its public hearings. She then read from her prepared comments, which are included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary. Her comments focused on two issues:

- (1) The need for more edible landscaping, and fruit trees in particular. She noted the many benefits of fruit trees and advocated planting efforts by the county.
- (2) Support for "SEA Streets" (Street Edge Alternatives) through which vegetated approaches are applied to reduce flows of stormwater runoff from roadways. She noted the application of this concept in the Seattle area and supported its use, along with low impact development parking areas without storm drains, in Fairfax County. She stressed the need for stormwater management approaches that would provide for no increases in runoff from new building projects, and she supported the application in Fairfax County of the "water wise" restrictions used in Washington, D.C.

Stella Koch expressed interest in the SEA streets concept; Ms. Fowler provided additional guidance on this concept and supported its implementation in Fairfax County.

9. Robert Makheja (RJM Companies)

Mr. Makheja's comments focused on exterior auto lifts at service stations; these facilities allow vehicles to be repaired in exterior areas. He referenced a series of four slides highlighting his concern about exterior auto lifts (focusing his comments on one slide in particular) and raised concern about the possible approval of these facilities in conjunction with zoning applications in revitalization areas. He noted the efforts of his real estate firm to revitalize blighted, ignored commercial buildings in revitalization areas (through by-right redevelopment of individual buildings) and stressed his view that exterior auto lifts worked at cross purposes with such efforts. He indicated that these activities were taking place throughout the county and that service station owners were providing outdoor lifts at their sites (and creating adverse impacts as described below) without telling anyone. He identified the following as impacts of exterior auto lifts:

- Visual pollution associated with the lifts themselves, in that the lifts can tower above trees and often are not buffered beyond one row of trees on the property line.
- Visual pollution associated with vehicles double parked near the lifts.
- Visual pollution associated with parts, tanks, tools and unscreened cargo storage containers that are typically provided in conjunction with these facilities.
- Noise pollution associated with vehicle maintenance; he stressed that these unshielded noise impacts often exceed Noise Ordinance limits.
- Potential water pollution from vehicular fluids that typically are released from maintenance activities; he noted that these exterior lift areas are often not designed to handle dripping/leaking vehicle fluids.
- Air pollutants and odors from the maintenance activities.
- Parking violations.

He expressed his view that, where such activities are being pursued in conflict with zoning or other code requirements, the service station owners are gaming the system through their knowledge of code enforcement procedures. He noted that Code Enforcement would not take a use to court for at least a year and that the service station owners know and take advantage of this fact. He indicated that the owners will drag out the enforcement process such that the illegal uses would remain for several years. He expressed his view that, ultimately, special exception amendment applications to legitimize the exterior auto lifts are approved out of exasperation. He stressed that it is not the large companies that are abusing the system but smaller service station operations.

Mr. Makheja added that county staff, in its reviews of special exception amendment applications, is routinely opposing the inclusion of exterior auto lifts within these applications but that these recommendations are not available to district land use committees when these committees consider the applications in advance of public

hearings. He criticized the district land use committee review process, noting that this process carries considerable weight in the approval process but that notices for these meetings can be poor, so that affected stakeholders can be shut out of the process. He added that these land use committees often do not have complete information about the proposals (including staff objections) when they meet to review them and that these activities are occurring in commercial revitalization areas, so residents are not affected. He reiterated his concerns, though, about impacts to adjacent commercial uses and to the environment.

Mr. Makheja's written materials noted that the Board of Supervisors would soon be considering a special exception application in the Lee District for which approval of an exterior auto lift is being sought. His slides noted that other gas station owners are watching this application closely and that the approval of this application would set a negative precedent that would be repeated elsewhere. His written materials urged EQAC to recommend that the Board of Supervisors defer any approvals of special exception amendment applications until EQAC or a task force could conduct a full study of exterior auto lifts.

Bob McLaren noted that every other application in Lee District for exterior auto lifts has been disapproved. He added that the application that was cited in Mr. Makheja's presentation, which has not been recommended for denial by the Lee District Land Use Advisory Committee, backs up to I-95. He questioned whether there would be any adverse noise impact in light of existing high levels of noise from highways in the area. Mr. Makheja acknowledged existing noise levels in this area but noted that there is an office building immediately adjacent to this site, and he expressed his view that the noise levels that would be generated by auto service activities in exterior areas would adversely affect the office building tenants. He raised concern that the Lee District Land Use Advisory Committee was not advised of office tenants on the second floor of the adjacent building. With respect to concerns about over-parking, Mr. McLaren noted that over-parking was being eliminated from this site. He added that the neighbors of the site should be aware of this application due to the posting of a sign providing notice of public hearings. Mr. Makheja noted that the sign was not posted at the time of the land use committee review, that there was no disclosure to neighbors of the committee's meeting, that the agenda for the meeting was not even posted to a website, and that the committee's review is critical to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors' review of the project. He indicated that, if a stakeholder was to testify against a proposal at one of the public hearings advertised on the sign that is posted, it can be too late, as the committee would have already issued its recommendation. Mr. McLaren respectfully disagreed with Mr. Makheja's concern.

Larry Zaragoza noted Mr. Makheja's concerns about improper storage associated with exterior auto lifts and inappropriate runoff from these facilities. He asked if there were any data about these concerns. Mr. Makheja referenced requirements for indoor lifts that are overseen by the federal Occupational Safety and Health

Administration and by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and stressed that outdoor service areas are not addressed. He noted that the OSHA and DEQ requirements call for the sealing of floors in the indoor work areas (in order to prevent spilled substances from entering groundwater) but that such requirements don't apply in exterior areas. He added that spills from maintenance activities can be expected and that asbestos from brake work could also be of concern. He also noted safety concerns associated with the exposure of outdoor service areas.

10. Nils Bjork

Mr. Bjork read from his prepared comments, titled "Surprise in the High Arctic." In addition to these comments, he circulated the following two handouts: (1) a one-page overview of an organization called "The Climate Mobilization" and (2) a Web page from the City of Lancaster, CA website summarizing numerous efforts pursued by the city's mayor, R. Rex Parris. The summary highlights a number of the mayor's initiatives implementing alternative energy measures, particularly solar power initiatives. All three handouts are included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary.

Mr. Bjork's presentation highlighted the critical nature of the climate change issue. He discussed the recent storm that caused temperatures at the North Pole to rise to nearly freezing, identifying this as one of many indicators that "something is quite dreadfully wrong." He stressed the need for an evaluation of our priority actions, including an end to the use of fossil fuels and the removal of fossil fuel emissions from the atmosphere through the safe sequestration of such emissions into the earth. He identified a target of removal of 10 gigatons of carbon dioxide yearly, noting that, even at this rate, it would take 200 years to address the 2,000 gigatons already emitted into the atmosphere.

Mr. Bjork concluded his comments by stressing the need for the world to turn immediately to renewable power sources and to remove the emissions already in the atmosphere.

George Lamb noted the number of comments addressing climate change and indicated that he saw a need for EQAC to become more aggressive in its efforts.

Larry Zaragoza expressed appreciation to Mr. Bjork for his comments and noted an earlier recommendation for the county to establish an energy dashboard for its facilities. He expressed support for this recommendation but stressed a broader need for more substantial efforts to support community-wide reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Johna Gagnon noted that all testimony presented tonight would be included in the public hearing summary, which would be provided to the Board of Supervisors.

Stella Koch suggested that there was a need for a comprehensive policy statement on this issue.

11. Monica Billger (Individual and Audubon Naturalist Society)

Ms. Billger identified herself as the Virginia Conservation Advocate for the Audubon Naturalist Society. She read her prepared statement, which is included in the written materials that are provided as an attachment to this summary. She commended EQAC for its Annual Report on the Environment, noting its value to her organization, as well as other organizations.

Ms. Billger described the activities of the Audubon Naturalist Society (ANS--see her written testimony for details), emphasizing its role in supporting the county's MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) efforts through grass roots advocacy and engagement. She raised concerns about a lack of adequate tree cover, woodland parks and other natural areas within urban neighborhoods and schools, and she cited what she characterized as a visible imbalance in the county in environmental education opportunities between higher income and lower income areas. She expressed concern that students in lower income areas often have limited outdoor learning opportunities, if any. Within that context, Ms. Billger offered four recommendations on behalf of ANS:

1. Implementation of the county's natural landscaping policy on county and public school properties, consistent with a 2005 county staff report.
2. In light of the lack of proposed funding for the state's Stormwater Local Assistance fund (SLAF) and the importance of this fund to local governments, including Fairfax County, encouragement of a patron (or the Board of Supervisors to encourage a patron) to put forth a budget amendment asking for \$50 million annually for the next two years (2016/2017).
3. Updating of the county's Tree Action Plan by improving the county's tree conservation ordinance and tree canopy goals.
4. Incorporation with EQAC's Annual Report of information correlating public health information with environmental data, particularly in lower income areas, and representation by an EQAC member of public health interests as they relate to the environment.

Stella Koch encouraged Ms. Billger to pass along specific suggestions on these matters.

Larry Zaragoza noted that several EQAC members are aware of the nexus between environmental issues and public health; he cited climate change impacts as an example. Ms. Billger indicated that highly urbanized areas with little tree canopy tend to have higher rates of asthma, poor air quality and increased heat. She noted as a concern in this regard a proposal from Fort Belvoir to clear 31 acres for a housing

project. She asked if the county has been involved in communications on this proposal.

Ken Lanfear asked for guidance on Ms. Billger's tree canopy vision, expressing his view that the issue is not the total amount of canopy but is instead the connectivity of tree canopy. Ms. Koch noted a recent study of conservation corridors by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and indicated that it would be worth looking at this again. She suggested that EQAC ask Keith Cline, the Director of the county's Urban Forest Management Division, to discuss this issue with EQAC.

Rich Weisman referenced efforts by Fairfax County Public Schools to enhance green learning through its Get2Green program and asked Ms. Billger for further guidance on the issue of imbalance in light of this program. Ms. Billger replied that schools need to have their staffs and their PTAs invested in this effort. She indicated that schools in higher income areas tend to have this investment, while schools in lower income areas don't.

Ms. Koch asked if the county had done anything in regard to SLAF. Kambiz Agazi indicated that he would look into this question.

12. Flint Webb (Air and Waste Management Association, Climate Change Division)

Mr. Webb identified himself as the Co-Chair of the Environment Committee of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations, as well as the Chair of the Climate Change Division of the Air and Waste Management Association. Subsequent to the public hearing, he clarified that his comments were being presented on behalf of the latter group. He focused his comments on the need for work on climate change adaptation. He called for a comprehensive county analysis of the impacts and costs of climate change adaptation, including costs associated with: new and strengthened stormwater management needs; ecosystem disruptions (e.g., pests moving northward into Fairfax County); water resource demands due to increases in droughts; and urban fires. He stated that we would see significant adverse impacts regardless of our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Stella Koch noted Mr. Webb's discussion of stormwater impacts and echoed his concern regarding changes in the duration and frequency of storms as a result of climate change. Mr. Webb stated that he would forward to Noel Kaplan a paper addressing changes to storm frequencies and intensities as a result of climate change.

Larry Zaragoza thanked Mr. Webb for his testimony. Mr. Webb noted that an employee of Leidos would be speaking at the March Green Breakfast to discuss his work on climate change impact assessment.

Closing

Chairman Koch asked if any EQAC members had further comments. Johna Gagnon noted that there had been written testimony submitted. Noel Kaplan summarized the testimony, noting that seven people had submitted materials so far, including some who had testified at the hearing. He stated that he would summarize the written testimony in the meeting summary and that, in the past, he had compiled all written materials as an attachment to the meeting summary.

Ms. Koch thanked everyone for coming out to the public hearing. She then asked Mr. Kaplan to present any video testimony that had been submitted. Mr. Kaplan noted that one video and one slide presentation had been submitted.

Video presentation: Friends of Accotink Creek <https://youtu.be/g40X3aolT4Q>

The video presentation, titled “Accotink Gorge: Imperiled Biodiversity—An urgent call to action” focuses on the area of the Accotink Creek stream valley located to the south of the Fort Belvoir North Area. The presentation identifies the gorge as one of the most biodiverse locations in the area and describes the ecological quality of this area, which is in close proximity to developed areas. It raises concern, though, about invasive Chinese wisteria vines that are spreading through this area and the potential for an irrevocable loss of the biodiversity in this area as a result of this invasive species. The video stresses the need for immediate action to remove Chinese wisteria from the area, noting that, while other areas face similar threats, there is a current and pressing opportunity to protect this particularly high quality area. The video notes that removal of the Chinese wisteria has not been identified by others as a high priority (including within a highly diverse meadow created in a power line easement). The video encourages anyone who has interest in organizing invasive species removal efforts to join the discussion.

Stella Koch asked if Kris Unger, a member of Friends of Accotink Creek, would like to provide any additional guidance about recommended actions. Mr. Unger noted that there are resource limitations within the Fairfax County Park Authority and its Invasive Management Area program that prevent the agency from prioritizing the Accotink Gorge and that his organization is therefore seeking volunteer support from individuals who are able to pursue invasive plant removal efforts appropriately.

Slide presentation: Avi Dey

<http://www.slideshare.net/icptwin45/prized-fishes-of-cb-new>

Mr. Dey's presentation highlights the value of the Chesapeake Bay's fishery. The presentation accompanies Mr. Dey's written testimony, which is summarized below and included within the written materials that are attached to this summary.

Written Testimony

As noted earlier, the following people did not testify at the public hearing but provided written comments, either before or after the public hearing:

- Randy Atkins
- Avi Dey (Mr. Dey also provided a slide presentation)
- Audubon Society of Northern Virginia
- Joyce Harris (two separate pieces of testimony, one with Henry Harris)
- Elizabeth Lonoff

All written comments are included within the attachment to this summary.

Randy Atkins

Mr. Atkins' testimony expressed concern with the proposed alignment of the Boone Boulevard extension in Tysons. He provided a link to an editorial that he wrote that was published in the Washington Post on July 11, 2014—the editorial identified adverse impacts to parkland and a Resource Protection Area that would be associated with the revised alignment of the proposed road extension and criticized the priorities that were being established in the area of the proposed project. The editorial called for more creative solutions to the planned alignment of Boone Boulevard.

Avi Dey

Mr. Dey offered his support for the county's stream restoration efforts and referenced the broader context of the Chesapeake Bay restoration effort. He cited, as an example of the value of the Chesapeake Bay restoration, the importance of the seafood industry to the state's and county's economy. He also stressed public education as a key component of the effort and included in his correspondence a slide presentation that highlighted the value of the Chesapeake Bay's fishery.

Audubon Society of Northern Virginia (Carl Kikuchi, President)

The Audubon Society of Northern Virginia's testimony was submitted by Carl Kikuchi, the organization's president. The testimony began with the identification of a concern about the loss of habitat in Fairfax County, largely due to development, and a request to EQAC to increase its attention to stemming the trend of habitat reduction.

The Society offered recommendations in the following areas of environmental concern—more details are provided in the organization's written testimony:

- Water Quality.
 - Full implementation and funding for the county's watershed plans.
 - Support for a litter action plan.
 - Aggressive enforcement of all TMDLs by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.
 - Elimination of releases into streams of untreated sewage.
 - Continuation of Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts.
 - Planting of vegetation along stream banks.

- Climate Change
 - Update of the county's analysis of impacts of sea level rise along the Potomac River and its tributaries.
 - Resiliency planning to support inland migration of wetlands.
 - Climate change impacts as a factor in all land use and public facilities decisions.
 - Creation of more incentives to discourage driving and increase use of public transit, including a halt to permits for big, impervious parking lots.
 - Support for more smart growth; evaluation of current county ordinances and policies to align them with smart growth goals.

- Ecological Resources and Parks
 - Fairfax County Park Authority:
 - Higher prioritization of natural resource restoration, preservation and enhancement.
 - Park planning and acquisition to increase natural area connectivity.
 - Biological surveying prior to development in parks.
 - Support for national parks and refuges, as well as state parks, and improvement in their connectivity to create more natural corridors.
 - Natural Landscaping:
 - Implementation of the June 22, 2005 natural landscaping plan.
 - Coordination with the Audubon at Home program.
 - Tree Cover:
 - Update of the Tree Action Plan.
 - Grounds maintenance practices that are more sensitive to native plants.

- Strengthened tree ordinance and canopy goal.
- More tree planting.
- Improved tree preservation efforts through both ordinance and enforcement.
- Halting of “volcano mulching” of trees on county properties.
- Halting of broadcast spraying of insecticides for the fall cankerworm.
- Science-based pest management efforts.
- Designation of one staff member of the Urban Forest Management Division to respond to advise citizens re: stopping tree destruction.
- Cats
 - Recommendation to the county animal shelter to stop giving cats to organizations that release them into the environment without owners.
 - Recommendation to the animal shelter to improve public information supporting the keeping of cats indoors.

Joyce Harris

Ms. Harris’s testimony focused on the enhancement of the county’s tree canopy through tree planting efforts. She noted that other jurisdictions in the area sponsored tree planting programs for homeowners that provided native trees to homeowners at reduced or no cost. She noted that Fairfax County lacks a countywide tree planting program for homeowners and recommended that one be established.

Joyce and Henry Harris

Mr. and Ms. Harris’s testimony focused on amplified prerecorded sound. They noted that the county’s Noise Ordinance addresses the generation of such sound on school grounds by school groups but that it does not address either such sound generation in parks or other recreational facilities or the generation of such sound on school grounds by outside groups. They noted the adverse impacts to property owners of noise levels above 55 decibels and called for more attention to this issue. They noted the availability of a video showing the impact of amplified, prerecorded sound in a residential neighborhood.

Elizabeth Lonoff

Ms. Lonoff’s testimony focused on two issues:

1. Transit plans along Richmond Highway—She expressed support for removing “auxiliary strip-mall roads” but raised concern about traffic increases that will be

associated with nearby urbanization, relocation of people living in affordable housing, the length of time it will take to establish express bus service in the corridor, the eventual abandonment of such bus service for an expensive Metrorail extension, induced traffic from widened traffic lanes and potential impacts to Huntley Meadows of changes along the Richmond Highway corridor.

2. The county's Cool Counties website—She noted broken links that need to be repaired, the need to add links to superseding Web pages and the need to incorporate or add a link to a climate change commitment/progress dashboard. She expressed concern that the reader may not know what information has been added recently and what information may no longer be valid.